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REPORT  
No. 543

## EXCHANGE OF LANDS IN PUEBLO COUNTY, COLO.

JUNE 7, 1951.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. COOLEY, from the Committee on Agriculture, submitted the following

### REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 3716]

The Committee on Agriculture, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 3716) to authorize an exchange of lands in Pueblo County, Colo., having considered the same, report favorably thereon and recommend that the bill do pass.

#### STATEMENT

The bill reported herewith authorizes the Forest Service to exchange 20 acres of land near Pueblo, Colo., for nine building lots within the city of Pueblo. The 20-acre tract is of no present usefulness to the Forest Service, while the building lots within the city are needed for the construction of residences for Forest Service personnel assigned to the San Isabel National Forest.

No money is involved in the transaction. The tract owned by the Forest Service and the lots it wants to acquire have been appraised at almost identical values and are to be exchanged even. Approval of the bill is recommended by the Department of Agriculture and concurred in by the Bureau of the Budget.

The report of the Department of Agriculture recommending approval of this legislation is attached hereto and made a part of this report.

G. J. McConnaughey,  
Acting Secretary

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,  
Washington, May 10, 1951.

HON. HAROLD D. COOLEY,  
*Chairman, Committee on Agriculture,  
House of Representatives.*

DEAR MR. COOLEY: This is in response to your request of April 18 for the recommendations of this Department on H. R. 3716, a bill to authorize an exchange of lands in Pueblo County, Colo.

This bill authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to exchange a tract of land owned by the United States and in the custody of the Forest Service of this Department, situated outside of the city of Pueblo, Colo., for certain lots within that city needed in connection with the administration of the San Isabel National Forest. There is no present authority for such exchange.

We recommend that H. R. 3716 be enacted.

The land of the United States described in the bill is a tract of 20 acres situated about one quarter of a mile outside the city limits of Pueblo. It was acquired in 1932 at a cost of \$800 by the Department of Commerce for a radio transmitter station of the Civil Aeronautics Authority. That agency subsequently erected upon it a one-room frame structure about 24 by 32 feet with heating facilities, a small shed 12 by 14 feet, and radio towers and antenna. This radio transmitter station was abandoned about 1942, the towers and equipment removed and the property then turned over to the Federal Works Agency for disposal. Custody of the land and buildings was subsequently given the Department of Agriculture by the Federal Works Agency for use in connection with the protection and administration of the nearby national forest. Because of its remoteness from municipal services and lack of water, however, the property has not proven satisfactory for the contemplated purpose. Adequate water for domestic use is not available from the city system and development of a satisfactory supply will require that a well be drilled to an estimated depth of 250 feet.

Recently, the Forest Service received an offer from an adjoining landowner to exchange for this land and improvements certain lots within the city of Pueblo which are much more advantageously situated and much more useful as sites for necessary national forest administrative improvements and facilities. These lots, which are described in H. R. 3716, are each 25 feet in width by 125 feet in depth and aggregate about 0.64 of an acre. They are satisfactorily located with regard to public utilities and municipal services, and will provide desirable locations for housing personnel and equipment required in connection with the administration of the San Isabel experimental forest.

Suitable housing facilities for Forest Service personnel in Pueblo have been increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to obtain. This condition has made it difficult and sometimes not possible to effect needed personnel transfers. The solution is to acquire satisfactory sites for erection of essential improvements as soon as the present emergency situation permits.

The two properties have been carefully appraised and the value of the lands and improvements now owned by the Government has been determined to be \$6,050, of which \$1,000 is attributable to the land and \$5,050 to the buildings. The appraised value of the lots described in the bill which would be exchanged for the Government tract is \$6,075.

Taxes on the lots to be acquired by the Government are about \$36 per year. Loss of this tax revenue should be offset, at least in large measure, by the return to local tax rolls of the 20-acre tract with improvements and a total appraised value of \$6,050. Pueblo County, in which the lands are situated, has been informed of the possible exchange of properties and has not made any objection thereto.

Enactment of this legislation and completion of the exchange authorized thereby would be of material help to the efficient administration and protection of the San Isabel National Forest and in the interest of effective use of existing public property. By letter of April 24, 1951, the General Services Administration informed this Department that it has no objection to the proposed legislation.

In accordance with your request that our recommendations be submitted directly to your committee, this report has not been transmitted through the Bureau of the Budget for an expression as to the relation of the bill to the program of the President.

Sincerely yours,

C. J. McCORMICK,  
*Acting Secretary.*